

Michael Semak - Clip 8

Equipment

As a rule, when I first started, I had one body, and one lens, and then my wife, Annette, bought a second lens for my birthday. And then we went to Europe for eleven months, and I used two lenses. But in the main, it was still one lens, the normal lens. And years later, an editor from the National Geographic magazine was up at the National Film Board Stills Division office, and he saw my Warrendale show. So when I wrote the National Geographic magazine saying just, "Dear Sir," I was going to West Africa, to Ghana and Sierra Leone, I said, "Is there anything I could do for you en route?" So they cabled me, and they had me come down, and I stayed at the Watergate hotel in Washington, DC. And the next day I went down, and the top editor asked me how much equipment do I have? I said, "What I have is the size of a small woman's purse. It contains two Leica bodies and two lenses." And he said, "Come here." And he took me to another room, and he said, "This guy's going on assignment." And he had like a dolly, that you carry heavy equipment. And he had about four or five big cases, metal cases. And that's his equipment. And I said, "I don't need anymore." And that's what I did in Ghana, in Tunisia, in Sierra Leone, in Paris, all taken with one or two cameras at a time.